

aration of nails occurring simultaneously or following a photosensitivity skin eruption. Photo-onycholysis usually involves fingernails, but may also involve sun-exposed toenails.

Superficial acneiform pustules may also be induced by tetracycline, apparently due to bacterial suppression and consequent overgrowth of the lipophilic yeast, *Pityrosporum orbiculare*, around hair follicles.

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#### Sunscreens

THE IDEAL SUNSCREEN SHOULD protect against light rays of wavelengths between 2900 and 4250 Angstroms. These include short ultraviolet "sunburning" rays (2900 - 3200 Å), long ultraviolet rays (3200 - 4000 Å), and near visible rays (4000 - 4250 Å). Long ultraviolet and near visible rays not only enhance sunburn and certain inherited photosensitivity diseases, but are the primary activating rays in most acquired photosensitivity diseases.

The sunscreen that presently seems most effective for protection against short ultraviolet light is a mixture of para-aminobenzoic acid (PABA) and alcohol. It gives a sustained high degree of protection and is non-toxic, stable, and cosmetically elegant. Other popular commercial agents either fail to provide significant protection or cause undesirable toxic effects.

Protection against long ultraviolet and near visible rays requires use of broader range sunscreens such as benzophenone, red veterinary petrolatum, titanium oxide or zinc oxide. However, repeated frequent application of these agents is necessary for sustained protection.

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#### Dermatophyte Test Medium

DERMATOPHYTE TEST MEDIUM (DTM) is a new fungus culture agar which enables the non-mycologist to easily grow and recognize griseofulvin-sensitive superficial fungi which infect skin. The medium contains phenol red indicator which changes from yellow to red when exposed to alkaline metabolites produced by dermatophyte fungi. It also contains cyclohexamide, gentamicin sulfate, and chlortetracycline HCl to reduce growth of contaminant yeasts, bacteria and saprophytic fungi.

The initial enthusiastic reports about use of DTM have been followed by the realization that it is not as reliable as Sabouraud's antibiotic agar for isolation of monilia and dermatophyte fungi. However, DTM provides a useful screening test and will hopefully encourage the busy practitioner to do cultures of suspected cutaneous fungal infections.

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#### Topical Urea

UREA IS A NONTOXIC, nonallergenic substance which increases water-binding capacity of stratum corneum, yielding softness and pliability of